The Pre-Islamic Roots of the Early Muslim Caliphate: The Emergence of Abū Bakr

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The early Muslim tradition, as it has come down to us, states unequivocally that the Qur'ān and the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet transmitted no clear and unequivocal instruction as to the form of rule or the identity of the ruler who would accede following Muḥammad's death. The differences which arose between the *Anṣār* and the *Muhājirūn*, which constituted the basic nucleus of the *umma*, at the *saqīfa* conference on the succession to the Prophet's rule, on one hand, and on the other, the claims subsequently raised by the Shīʿa with regard to ʿAlī's right of inheritance, leave no doubt that the matter of succession was not settled by the two principal sources of authority in Islam. Moreover, the various methods according to which the first three caliphs came to power, also indicate the lack of any clear concept with regard to the nature of the caliphate during the three decades which elapsed following the Prophet's death.

In the polemic treatise written by al-Jāḥiẓ, in the third century of the *hijra*/ninth century AD, concerning the *imāma*, or caliphate, in his attempt to refute the arguments of the Shīʿa, which claimed that ʿAli's right to rule had been expressed in the Prophet's will, he states: *"fa-qad nafaḍnā al-qur'āna min awwalihī ilā ākhirihī, fa-lam najid fīhi āyatan tanuṣṣu ʿalā imāmah"* ("We have scrutinized the Qur'ān from cover to cover, but we did not find a single verse which instructs on the caliphate"). Referring to matters brought up at the *saqīfa* conference, he states that neither side claimed in its arguments that the Prophet had promised the succession to any particular person.[1]) Another Muslim scholar ascribes the Muslims' dispute over the caliphate to the fact that the Prophet left the question of the *imāma* open and did not decide on it[2]). In another passage, al-Jāḥiẓ observes that the *Anṣār*'s proposal to share the rule with the *Muhājirūn*, with one ruler coming from each party, constitutes further proof that the

[1]) *al-ʿUthmāniyya*, p. 273.

[2]) *Sharḥ nahj al-balāgha*, vol. IX. 26.

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question was not decided by the Prophet. The argument raised by the *Muhājirūn* (adds al-Jāḥiẓ), to the effect that the Prophet had stipulated that the caliphs must come from Quraysh *(al-aʾimma min Quraysh)*, was rejected at the outset by the *Anṣār*, who could not accept it as conclusive evidence; this was reflected in the refusal of their leader, Saʿd b. ʿUbāda, to swear fealty to Abū Bakr; in protest, he left his native Madina and went on to die in exile in Syria.[3])

Other scholars have utterly ruled out the possibility that any of the rival parties received any instruction, whether written or verbal *(naṣṣ)*, concerning the caliphate. They base their opinion on the fact that all of the rivals intended to rely on *sābiqa*, *faḍāʾil* and *qarāba* (seniority in Islam, merits and kinship) alone – proving that the *ḥadīths* assigning the right of succession to either ʿAlī or Abū Bakr were falsified.[4])

Over and above all this, there is the direct testimony of key figures in both rival camps – that of Abū Bakr, later known as al-ʿUthmāniyya, and the Hāshimite camp which supported the right of the Prophet's family to rule. Two protocol speeches by Abū Bakr and al-ʿAbbās (uncle of the Prophet and of ʿAlī), which preceded the oath of fealty given by al-ʿAbbās to Abū Bakr, stated explicitly that the Prophet had not sealed the fate of the succession issue, but that he had left it to the *umma* to decide who should be entrusted with the yoke of rule.[5]) This fact was emphasized in another speech, made by ʿUmar after the *saqīfa* conference.[6]) For the same reason, and out of a desire to follow strictly in the Prophet's footsteps, ʿUmar, when asked – in his last hours, on his deathbed – to name his successor, refrained from appointing anyone to rule.[7]) ʿAlī, the symbol of the Shīʿite movement, was not willing to testify otherwise, and confirmed that the Prophet had indeed left the matter to the *umma* leaders to decide.[8]) A pro-Abbasid tradition would have it that al-ʿAbbās had urged his nephew ʿAlī to approach the dying Prophet and ask about the fate of the caliphate, but that ʿAlī had refused, for fear that the Prophet would recommend someone from another clan and the *Banū Hāshim* would lose any chance of ruling.[9]) Western and modern Muslim scholars, in their exploration of this mat-

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[3]) *Rasāʾil*, vol. IV, 290–293.

[4]) *Sharḥ*, vol. VI, 12–13.

[5]) *Tārīkh al-khamīs*, II, 200; *al-Imāma wa-al-siyāsa*, I, 15.

[6]) *Tārīkh al-Yaʿqūbī*, II, 125; Ibn Hishām, *Sīrat al-nabī*, 1075; Ṭabarī, I, 1828; *Kanz al-ʿummāl* (no. 14064); *al-Bidāya*, VI, 301.

[7]) Ṭabarī, I, 2777; *al-Imāma wa-al-siyāsa*, I, 23; Ibn Saʿd, III, 249, 256.

[8]) *Majmaʿ al-zawāʾid*, V, 175

[9]) *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, I, 586.

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ter, have concluded that the Qur'ān and the *sunna* include no hint that the matter of rule had been settled by the Prophet.[10])

The fact that the Prophet did not designate his successor attracted the attention of the Muslim scholars. Al-Jāḥiẓ reached the conclusion that the Prophet's abandoning the question of succession was, in fact, a decision. Al-Jāḥiẓ believes that, had the Prophet not seen that his silence on this point would preserve Muslim interests, he might have taken a different measure.[11]) In other words, al-Jāḥiẓ was convinced that the Prophet's refraining to designate an heir stemmed from his concern for purely Muslim interests. Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, a seventh-/thirteenth-century scholar, referring to this question, quoted the opinion of one of his colleagues, Muḥammad b. Sulaymān, who believed that there really was some important consideration behind the non-decision, but that no one knows what the Prophet had in mind. He raised two hypotheses: one, that the Prophet feared that such a decision might give rise to differences within the community; and the other, that the Prophet thought such a step would be exploited by the hypocrites who held a grudge against Islam, as hostile propaganda, in order to affix a secular-political label to the Prophetic mission and accuse the Prophet of having connived to establish a monarchical rule for his own clan. Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, following this critical view, raises the supposition that the Prophet may not have been aware that his own death was near, and could have hoped for time to decide in this matter after recovering from his illness.[12])

Wilferd Madelung, referring to this issue, rejects the conclusions reached by modern Sunnite apologists who believe that the Prophet's refraining to name a successor from among the members of his clan stemmed from his desire to have the issue of succession settled by the *shūrā*, the principle of consultation. Madelung claims that the principle of the *shūrā* mentioned in the Qur'ān refers only to the settlement of everyday disputes and is not relevant to so weighty a matter as the succession to the Prophet. With regard to the inheritance, Madelung wonders why the Prophet did not make the proper arrangements, although he hoped for an heir from among his own family members, on the basis of the experience of previous prophets. In his response, he refers to the Islamic point of view, which holds that, on such a significant issue, he expected a Qur'ānic revelation, which did not come in time.

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[10]) Wellhausen (Arabic tr.), p. 33; Arnold, p. 19; Tritton, 109; Shaban (Arabic), p. 26; Watt, W. M., *Islamic Political Thought*, 31; Madelung W., *The Succession to Muḥammad*, p. 6, 16–17.

[11]) *al-'Uthmāniyya*, 278.

[12]) *Sharḥ*, vol, IX, 27.

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With regard to the opinions of non-Muslim historians, Madelung holds that they tended to believe that Muḥammad hesitated out of awareness of the difficulties which a Hāshimite successor might expect, in view of the severe competition for rule between the clans of Quraysh and the relative weakness of the *Banū Hāshim*. Madelung believes the Prophet to have been waiting for an opportune moment to appoint his cousin 'Alī, or perhaps to have deferred the decision in hope of living long enough to appoint one of his grandsons. His sudden and unforeseen death may not have left him time to be aware that his end was approaching.[13]) Shaban, on the other hand, believes the reason why the Prophet did not come to a decision – although he must have been aware of his imminent demise, having already reached old age according to the criteria of his time – was that he wanted his supporters to handle the question of inheritance themselves. This desire was the natural result of his profound understanding of the concept of rule which prevailed in his environment. Arab society, at that time, was not ready to accept a monarch – far less an autocrat; accordingly, he left the door open for the appearance of a new leader, in line with Arab tradition.[14]) Shaban's opinion is not far from that of his precursor, Sir Thomas Arnold, who states in reference to the Prophet's non-decision that Muḥammad, "the child of his age," was aware of the strong tribal feelings "which recognized no hereditary principle in its primitive forms of political life, and left the tribe entirely free to select their own leader."[15])

II

The appointment of Abū Bakr as successor to Muḥammad at the conference held at the *saqīfa* of *Banū Sā'ida* on the day of the Prophet's death – immediately after the death was announced and before the Prophet could be buried – as well as the relative ease of the appointment process and the initial oath ceremony, with relatively little objection on the part of those witnessing the event (including the overwhelming majority of both the *Anṣār* and the *Muhājirūn*), prove beyond all doubt that both the appointee and the method of his selection were not unacceptable to the Muslims undergoing this experience.

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[13]) Madelung, op. cit., pp. 16–18. In this argument Madelung does not go far from the early Muslim tradition introduced by Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, as was shown above.

[14]) Shaban, *Islamic History, New Interpretation* (Arab tr.); pp. 26–27.

[15]) Arnold, *The Caliphate*, p. 19.

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The three men who led the move to appointment – Abū Bakr, Abū 'Ubayda and 'Umar – who represented the elite of Quraysh, *al-muhājirūn al-awwalūn*, as well as the senior representatives of the *Anṣār* who were present at the conference and gave their approval to Abū Bakr's appointment[16]), shared a high level of responsibility and concern for the fate of Islam and the Muslims in the most difficult moment Islam had ever known. This level of responsibility and concern was, in fact, too high to allow them to make a wrong move, which could undermine the situation even further, precisely when the Arab tribes which had only recently accepted Muḥammad's sovereignty were preparing to throw it off, in what was later termed the *ridda* movement, and when a central Khazrajite leader was claiming the right of succession for himself and thus threatening the unity of the Muslim community in Madina against threats from without.[17])

The rightness of the appointment was emphasized even further by the mass assent as soon as the identity of the successor was announced and the Muslim public were required to swear fealty to the new ruler, at the mass prayer ceremony held at the mosque on the day after the appointment.[18]) However, along with the overwhelming assent to Abū Bakr's succession, several persons – most of whom had not been present at the scene – expressed criticism. Aside from the response of Sa'd b. 'Ubāda, the furious leader of the Khazraj, at the failure of his own attempt to gain the role of successor, most of the critics came from the tribe of Quraysh, of which Abū Bakr was himself a member. The criticism focused on two elements. The first of these had to do with the inferior status of the new leader, who was (according to then accepted criteria) a member of an inferior clan in Makka; this constituted a disadvantage which they felt weakened his right to lead the nation. The second element concerned procedural flaws in the process of his selection, given that a number of notable personages

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[16]) Aside from Sa'd b. 'Ubāda the *Anṣār* were represented by their tribal leaders in the *saqīfa* meeting whom the sources identified as: *unās min ashrāfihim*, in the sense of their nobility. *Sharḥ*, vol. VI, pp. 6–7; *al-Imāma wa-al-siyāsa*, I, p. 5. One of them was identified as: *sayyid*. *Sharḥ*, VI, 9. On the part of the *Muhājirūn*, aside from Abū Bakr, 'Umar and Abū 'Ubayda, none of the middle ranking or lowly Mekkan immigrants is recorded as having had the honour of participating this crucial meeting. See: Madelung, p. 32.

[17]) Ibn Abī Shayba, vol. XIV, p. 565; *Sharḥ*, VI, 7; *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, I, 581.

[18]) Ṭabarī, vol. I. 1828–1829; *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. I. 582; Ibn Isḥāq, 1075; *al-Ḥalabiyya*, vol. III, 483. It is worthwhile to state here that the conclusion reached by 'Abd al-Rāziq, *al-Khilāfa wa-uṣūl al-ḥukm*, p. 25, that the early caliphate was imposed by means of force is undefendable.

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were not present at the session and did not take part in the decision. In addition to these two elements, there is a third theme of criticism, though this is actually an anachronism and not relevant to the event itself. It was this theme which was adopted by the Shīʿa, which claimed that the appointment contradicted the contents of the *waṣiyya*, the Prophetic will, which stated that the right to the caliphate devolved exclusively on ʿAlī and his house.

Examination of these critical factors in the perspective of the period shows that the criticism was addressed to neither the ruling institution itself, the man appointed to head it, nor the method by which the appointment was obtained. Generally speaking, these three elements were properly carried out in accordance with the guidelines of tribal tradition, which the religion of Islam had not yet succeeded in extirpating – or, at least, whose norms Islam had not yet replaced with new standards. Apparently, the office of the caliph was still conceived in terms appropriate to the chief of the tribe – in other words, in line with the institution of the tribal *sayyid*.[19]) More precisely, the new institution fitted in with the Qurayshite pattern of leadership, which the clans of Quraysh viewed as part of their heritage, irrespective of Muḥammad's Prophethood.[20]) Admittedly, the *Anṣār* at the *saqīfa* conference attempted to introduce a new criterion, a Muslim religious criterion, instead of the tribal Arab criterion which had been universally accepted for generations. A speech made by the *Anṣār* leader Saʿd b. ʿUbāda listed the criteria according to which the *Anṣār* believed that they, and not the Qurayshites, were entitled to rule.[21]) The rebuttal speech attributed to Abū Bakr, which expressed ideas shared by his colleague ʿUmar, not only rejected the *Anṣār*'s claims of supremacy over the *Muhājirūn* in the area of religious credit, and not only emphasized the superiority of the Qurayshites, but stressed another principle, which the *Anṣār* had overlooked – a principle which had nothing to do with religion: Abū Bakr stated, insis-

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[19]) Arnold, 20; Tritton, 109, W. M. Watt, 40; Shaban, 27.

[20]) *Sharḥ*, vol. IX, 52.

[21]) Ṭabarī, vol. I, 1838; *Sharḥ*, vol. VI, 5–6. According to these reports, the *Anṣār* claimed the leadership for themselves alone, the words of Saʿd b. ʿUbada leaves no doubt concerning this issue, he was reportedly said: *"istabiddū bi-hādhā al-amr, fa-innahū lakum dūna an-nās."* ("Let no body take part in the ruling affair, it belongs to you alone.") It is worth mentioning in this context to refer to Madelung's doubts concerning the accusation of the *Anṣār* by ʿUmar that they were plotting to seize the reign after Muḥammad, the *Anṣār* according to him wished to restore their control over their own city because the idea of the Caliphate had not yet been born, Madelung, 31.

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tently and definitively, that the Arab tribesmen would not obey any ruler who was not of Quraysh.[22]) In so stating, Abū Bakr not only repudiated the *Anṣār*'s claim to succession, but rejected religious criteria as a basis for eligibility to rule.[23]) Abū Bakr's disregard of the religious element assuredly did not arise from any motive related to Islam itself, and was just as certainly not meant to express contempt for the new faith – that faith to which he himself clung and for which he made supreme sacrifices, more than any other Muslim. He failed to take religious considerations into account primarily because he was a statesman and his actions were those of a realistic politician. He was attempting to preserve the unity of the *umma*, which had been established by the Prophet under the banner of Madina. The unity of the *umma* meant the subordination of all Arab tribes to the sovereignty of whatever leader would succeed Muḥammad.[24]) At a time when the overwhelming majority of tribes had not yet accepted Islam as a religion, and even the response of those which had answered the call of Islam was still weak and superficial, it would be difficult for them to obey any leader appointed on a religious Islamic basis. The objective set by Abū Bakr could only be fulfilled by a leadership centered on the Quraysh, who had succeeded – even before the advent of Muḥammad – in imposing their hegemony on most of the Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula.[25]) The *Anṣār*, like any other Arab entity, could not fulfill that function, due to

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[22]) Ibn Hishām, 1073; Ṭabari, vol. I. 1822–1823; *al-ʿUthmāniyya*, 200–201; ʿAbd al-Razzāq, II, 443. As to the repeatedly quoted *ḥadīth* which unequivocally states that Muslim rulers should come from *Quraysh, "al-a'immatu min Quraysh"* Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, vol. III, 129; al-Suyūṭi, p. 9; *Tārīkh al-khamīs*, II, 200; al-Māwardī, p. 4; *al-Ḥalabiyya*, III, 480, not only contradicts the consensus that the Prophet never nominated his successor, but also failed to persuade the *Anṣār* to give up their claim to the leadership, because Saʿd b. ʿUbāda and his clan continued in their opposition to the caliphate of Abū Bakr and ʿUmar till he died in his exile in Syria, *Rasā'il al-Jāḥiẓ*, vol. VI, 293–295. *Sharḥ*, vol. VI, 10–11. Furthermore, it is more probable that it was an invented *ḥadīth* to serve the later Qurayshite dynasties' interest to keep the reign of the Muslim empire in the hands of the Umayyads and the Abbasids against their opponents from the Khawārij.

[23]) Though Abū Bakr had minimized the weight of the religious criteria as produced by the *Anṣār*, the same religious factor had contributed to him to be recognized as the only candidate for the succession of Muḥammad's political function within his Qurayshite colleagues. See: F. M. Donner, *The early Islamic Conquest*, p. 83.

[24]) Madelung, 31–32; Donner, op. cit., 83.

[25]) M. J. Kister, *Mecca and Tamīm*; Nagel, *"Some consideration concerning the pre-Islamic and Islamic Foundations of the Authority of the Caliphate,"* pp. 177–197.

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the fact that the Arabs would not agree to have them as leaders. This was stated clearly by 'Umar at the *saqīfa* conference.[26]) The Arabs would never recognize the leadership of any body but that of Quraysh, as was stressed by Abū Bakr addressing the convocators of the *saqīfa* from among the *Anṣār*.[27])

The emphasis on the tribal Arab element in the statements by Abū Bakr and 'Umar does not merely expose the political orientation of the successor's role, which was aimed at hegemony over all of the Arab tribes, but also presents the overall political concept which prevailed in Arab society in those days. This was a conservative concept which could not tolerate any change in the patterns of political leadership, which had coalesced into the model of the *sayyid*, or chieftain, and had become a part of the carefully preserved Arab tradition.

At this point, we must ask: Did the method adopted at the *saqīfa* conference take the typical Arab concept into account? Was Abū Bakr's appointment in line with the basic outlines of that concept?

III

Before attempting to answer the above two questions, we should take a glance at the political institution which existed in Arab society prior to Islam. The institution of the *sayyid*, according to all available testimony, was the ruling political institution known to tribal Arab society. The powers of the *sayyid*, which generally extended only to the tribe to which he belonged, were sometimes expanded to include additional tribes as well. This development of the *sayyid*'s powers would generally take place under the direct influence of an external force – a foreign kingdom, or the Byzantines or the Sassanian great kings. This gave rise to a new type of leader, referred to in tribal Arab tradition as *malik* ("king") or by the parallel term of *dhū al-tāj* ("owner of the crown"), who ruled in a sort of primitive tribal monarchy.[28])

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[26]) Addressing the *Anṣār* 'Umar said: *"inna al-'araba lā tarḍā an tu'ammirakum"* ("The Arabs will never agree to invest power on you"), or rather accept you as their leader. *Sharḥ*, vol. VI, 9; *al-Imāma wa-al-siyāsa*, vol. I, p. 8.

[27]) Ibn Hishām, 1073; Ṭabarī, vol. I, 1823; *al-'Iqd al-farīd*, vol. IV, 258; *Sharḥ*, vol. VI, 40; al-Bustī, 421.

[28]) On this type of primitive king see: Khalil 'Athamina, "The Tribal kings in pre-Islamic Arabia, A study of the epithet *malik* or *dhū al-tāj* in early Arabic tradition," *al-Qantara*, Revista de Estudios Árabes, vol XIX (fasc. 1), Madrid, 1998, pp. 19–37.

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The institution of the *sayyid* existed in every tribe, no matter how weak or strong, how small or large.[29]) However, there were obvious differences between one *sayyid* and another, with most of the prestige, power and influence being held by a relatively small number of clans from which the holders of this position sprang.[30]) The position of *sayyid* was not a competitive position, but belonged exclusively to one clan within the tribe.[31]) This clan would be known by the term *ahl al-bayt*, a certain lineage or sub-lineage which became recognized as the ruling family.[32])

To the best of our knowledge, the term *ahl al-bayt* was not used with this meaning prior to Islam. It first appeared in the year 5 of the *hijra*/627 AD, shortly before the battle of al-Khandaq. While the Muslims were busy digging a trench, an argument broke out between the *Anṣār* and the *Muhājirūn* concerning the affiliation of Salmān al-Fārisī. Each side claimed that Salmān was one of its own. At this point, the Prophet intervened, to put an end to the dispute, and stated that Salmān belonged to the Prophet's ruling family: *Salmān minnā ahl al-bayt.*[33])

After Muḥammad's death, the political-governmental significance of this term increased and acquired additional connotations. The Umayyad dynasty referred to itself as *ahl al-bayt*; this included not only the Umayyad Caliphs and their family, but all holders of state offices from among the ruling family, or even from other tribes with no blood relationship to the rulers.[34]) This extended significance of *ahl al-bayt* was subsequently adopted by the rulers of the Abbasid dynasty.[35]) During the *jāhiliyya* period, prior to Islam, the term *al-bayt* (including the definite article) replaced the previously used *ahl al-bayt*, appearing frequently in the *nasab* (Arab genealogy literature) and referring to a certain clan which ruled in a certain

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[29]) Donner, op. cit., 33; Belyaev, *The Arab Caliphate*, 61-62.

[30]) Abū 'Ubayda, *al-Dībāj*, 79–85; Abū al-Baqā' al-Ḥillī, *al-Manāqib*, 186–187; Ibn Rashīq, *al-'Umda*, II, 192; Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddima*, 241–242; *Lisān al-'arab*, v. (Bayt); *al-Aghānī*, vol. XVII, 105–106.

[31]) Ibn Khaldūn, op. cit., 230.

[32]) Donner, op. cit., 32; Sharon M., *Black Banners from the East*, p. 78; Khālidi T., *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period*, p. 53; Watt, op. cit., p. 35.

[33]) Wāqidī, *al-Maghāzī*, 446–447. According to the Shī'ite tradition the term *ahl al-bayt* connotates particularly 'Alī and his house, i. e. *al-a'imma*, while the term *āl al-bayt* means always the offspring of Muḥammad's family, al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, vol. XXV, 216.

[34]) Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Sīrat 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz*, p. 28.

[35]) Ṭabarī, vol. II, 1937. On the religious connotation of the term *ahl al-bayt* adopted by the Shī'a and attaching it exclusively to the house of 'Alī see: Sharon, op. cit., 79.

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tribe – in other words, the clan from which the *sayyid*s of that tribe originated.[36])

In reference to such famous clans as that of Quṣayy b. Kilāb or those of some of his descendants (such as 'Abd Manāf), Ibn Ḥazm uses the term *al-bayt* to show that the *sayyid*s of their tribe came from that clan. Specifically, he uses the phrase *wa-fīhī al-bayt*.[37]) Alternatively, Ibn al-Kalbī uses such phrases as *lahum al-bayt*, *wa-ilayhim al-bayt*, *kāna al-baytu fīhī*, or *wa-huwa baytu banī* . . ., in order to point out a certain clan from which the tribal *sayyid*s sprang.[38])

The term *sayyid* was not the only term in use for this institution; it had such synonyms as *ra'īs*, *shaykh*, *rabb* and *amīr*.[39]) The most interesting synonym, however, is *bayt*, whose literal meaning is "house", and which is sometimes used to replace *sayyid* in the *ansāb* works.[40])

Extremely problematic is the synonymous term *ra'īs*, which – while at times merely used as a substitute for *sayyid*[41]), was specifically given as a title to the military commander of the tribe's fighting force in a certain battle or a certain military operation.[42]) The appointment to this position was made by the tribe as a whole; it was generally a temporary appointment which ended on completion of the campaign.[43]) Sometimes, however, command was hereditary, and there were cases when three generations of the

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[36]) In this context one should distinguish between *ahl al-bayt*, with the definite noun, and the indefinite one which means a certain clan or every clan within a certain tribe without any connotation to leadership or the ruling issue. A certain clan called Dahmān is described as: *"wa-hum ahlu bayt*^{in} *fī Qays."* ("Dahmān are a clan which belongs to Qays.") Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-'Arab*, 243. For another example see: Ibid, p. 254. Ibn al-Kalbī used the same terminology referring to ordinary clans or any other clan in a certain tribe; see: *Jamharat al-nasab*, p. 293.

[37]) Op. cit., p. 14.

[38]) Ibn al-Kalbī, op. cit., 156, 166, 244, 150. For further examples see: 249, 301, 313, 330, 409, 417.

[39]) al-'Alī, *Muḥāḍarāt*, 156.

[40]) Referring to certain tribal chiefs Ibn-Kalbī used the phrase: *wa-huwa baytu banī Yarbū'*, "He is the *sayyid* or the chief of the tribal sub-group of Yarbū'," 218, see also: p. 409; *al-Bayān wa-al-tabyīn*, vol. III, 97–98.

[41]) Ibn al-Kalbī, op. cit., 176, 218; Ibn Khaldūn, 230, 232, 241–242.

[42]) Ibn Ḥazm, op. cit., 326; Ibn al-Kalbī, op. cit., 301, 315, 318, 336, 338, 350. The name of the battle in which a certain person took the command is sometimes mentioned, see: Ibid., p. 315, 336. Sometimes, it was reported that some body took the command in the war, see *al-Aṣma'iyyāt*, p. 144.

[43]) Watt, op. cit., 40, In some cases the nomination was a permanent one. *ra'asa fa-ṭālat ri'āsatuhū*, ("He took the command for a long time"), Ibn al-Kalbī, op. cit., 293.

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same family held the post of military commander.[44]) Two or more tribes would occasionally give joint command of their fighting forces to one man, when they encountered a situation in which they had a common goal.[45]) A *sayyid* could be given military command, if he demonstrated military prowess and the ability to fight as well as good leadership qualifications.[46]) As a symbol of military command, the holders of this prestigious position had the right to hang a sword at the entrance to their homes; this was referred to as *sayf al-riʾāsa*, the sword of command.[47])

The *jāhilī* concept of *al-bayt*, or the Islamic concept of *al-bayt*, was especially based on the values of *sharaf* (nobility) for the particular lineage. The values of nobility, according to tribal Arab tradition, were hereditary; accordingly, the *siyāda*, or tribal leadership, must be the exclusive right of the descendants of that clan.[48]) The value of *sharaf* was also a cumulative value, which reached its height after years of continuity in assuming the position of *siyāda*. This continuity of the *siyāda* could not be formed or perfected by less than four consecutive *sayyid*s originating in the same clan.[49]) In order to preserve and foster the continuity of the *siyāda*, those in the position of *sayyid* had to invest efforts and do good and noble deeds. This is reflected in the writings of two poets who became *sayyid*s in succession to their respective ancestors.[50]) The noblest of origins was in itself no

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[44]) Ibid., 439, 556.

[45]) *al-Naqāʾiḍ*, p. 113, 149, 240; Ibn Saʿīd, *Nashwat al-ṭarab*, vol. I, pp. 285–286.

[46]) *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, p. 320; Ibn Saʿīd, op. cit., vol. I, p. 238.

[47]) Ibn al-Kalbī, op. cit., 434.

[48]) Watt M., op. cit., p. 35; Sharon, op. cit., p. 78.

[49]) Ibn Khaldūn, op. cit., 240–421; Donner, op. cit., p. 33. The continuity of *siyāda* in the clan when the son inherited it from his father is clearly indicated in two lines of poetry of an early Jāhili poet who says:

wajadtu abī fīhim wa-jaddī kilayhimā,
yuṭāʿu wa-yuʾtā amruhū wa-huwa muḥtabi.
Fa-lam ataʿammal li-ʾs-siyādati fīhimu,
wa-lākin atatnī ṭāʾi ʿan ghayra muʿtabi.

("I found both my father and my grand father obeyed and served while they are seated comfortably. So I did not work hard to achieve the office of *siyāda*, which I got smoothly without any pain.") al-Jāḥiẓ, *al-Ḥayawān*, II, 96. See also the verse of al-Samaw'al in which he expresses the continuity of the *siyāda* in his family saying: *"Idhā sayyid*[un] *minnā khalā qāma sayyid*[un]*"*, *Amāli al-qālī*, vol. I, p. 270.

[50]) On the first one called ʿAbdullāh b. Muʿāwiya, see: al-*ʿIqd al-farīd*, vol. II, 290; *Dhayl al-amālī*, 117; al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj*, vol. III, 112–113. On the other named ʿĀmir b. al Ṭufayl, see: *al-Shiʿr wa-al-shuʿarāʾ*, p. 192; *ʿUyūn al-akhbār*, vol. I, 226; *al-Ḥayawān*, vol. II, 95; *al-ʿIqd al-farīd*, vol. II, 291; *Dhayl al-amālī*, 118.

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guarantee to attaining the post of *sayyid* or keeping it within a certain clan. In addition to *sharaf*, other resources were also necessary, especially material, physical and social resources; these were reflected in a large number of fighters, wealth, and good connections with other tribal groups.[51]) Of all the above resources, strength in numbers was the dominant factor in ensuring and safeguarding the right to *siyāda*, and may in fact be described as a precondition for the very existence of that right. The practical expression of that element was the assurance of a large number of warriors from the same clan, who would be willing to protect the clan and ensure the continued influence and authority of the *sayyid*. No wonder, then, that many clans which attained *siyāda* within a certain tribe were numerically larger than the other clans of that tribe. The phrase *wa-fīhī al-baytu wa-'l-'adad*[52]) ("They own the right of leadership and they are the largest number"), appearing in Arab literature, constitutes conclusive evidence of this. In this connection, let us mention the Umayyad Caliph Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik, who defined the *siyāda* and listed four elements vital to its continued existence: a splendid noble past, its sons' ability to preserve past glory, a large amount of capital, and prestige to ensure influence on the ruling apparatus.[53])

Siyāda was always a matter for competition among the clans of the tribe, thanks to its inherent prestige and glory. As a result of this incessant competition, the sources attest to cases in which the *siyāda* was transferred from one lineage to another.[54]) Evidence of this phenomenon is preserved in the genealogical literature.[55]) However, the most striking example of the transfer of the *siyāda* is that of the Quraysh tribe, in which the *siyāda*, within the relatively brief span of three generations, passed from *Banū Hāshim* to *Banū Makhzūm* and from *Banū Makhzūm* to *Banū 'Abd-Shams*.[56]) In general, the *siyāda* was transferred from a clan whose strength had declined

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[51]) *al-Ḥayawān*, vol. III, 79–80, 83.

[52]) Ibn al-Kalbī, op. cit., 85; Ibn Ḥazm. op. cit., 256, 292, 295, 303, 321, 325, Multitude, or great number of the members of the clan or the tribe became part of ancient Arab values in which they competed each other. See: *Lisān al-'arab*, v. *(k. th. r)*.

[53]) Zamakhsharī, *Rabī' al-abrār*, vol. III, pp. 184–185.

[54]) Donner, op. cit., pp. 32–33.

[55]) In a report of Ibn al-Kalbī about a sub-group of *Banū Sa'd* the Tamīmites, he refers to a certain lineage, the descendants of Ḥuwayy b. Ghanama and states that they required the *siyāda* after the *Banū Himmān* whom they replaced, *wa-kāna al-baytu fīhī ba'da banī Himmān*. Ibn al-Kalbī, op. cit., 244.

[56]) Wellhausen, op. cit., p. 38; M. Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, p. 32.

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to a stronger clan.[57]) Still, as long as the clan could hold its own in the face of competition, as long as it could manage to repel the attempts to deprive it of the right to rule, the members of that clan would be given the chance to assume the role of *sayyid* on the death or resignation of the current leader. This is reflected in a stanza of the famous poem by al-Samaw'al b. 'Ādiyā', which states that, on the death of a *sayyid*, a new *sayyid* must arise from among the members of the clan.[58]) Ibn Khaldūn, writing on the subject, noted the transfer of the position from one man to another within the same lineage, as long as it still held means of power and control.[59])

The manner in which the transfer of the role of *sayyid* was actually accomplished is not explained in the two abovementioned quotations. Western and modern Muslim scholars who have investigated the question of succession to the leadership of a nomadic Arab tribe have not reached a consensus in this matter; at times, their conclusions are actually contradictory. Some of them claimed that the post of *sayyid* was not hereditary, and that the new leader was selected by the body of elders in the tribe, called the *majlis*; others stated that the element of heredity was the general basis for selecting the new leader.[60]) In fact, the question of succession to leadership in pre-Muslim Arab society was handled according to a unique method which is difficult to classify as either hereditary or not.

The institution of *siyāda* was not a royal one; the Arabs made a significant distinction between *siyāda* and monarchy. When Abū 'Ubayda, the traditionalist Muslim historian, in referring to the famous Arab ruling families, cited four *buyūtāt* (plural of *bayt*), he was asked why he did not mention the ruling dynasty of Kinda. His reply was that the Kinda were kings, and that it was therefore incorrect to include them with ruling families, *ahl al-*

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[57]) Ibn Khaldūn, op. cit., 231.

[58]) The verse goes as follows:
"idhā sayyid[un] *minnā khalā qāma sayyid*[un]*, qa'ul*[un] *li-mā qāla 'l-kirāmu fa'ūlu." Amālī al-Qālī*, vol. I, 270.

[59]) He says: *"wa-'l-riyāsatu 'alā 'l-qawmi innamā takūnu mutanāqalat*[an] *fī manbit*[in] *wāḥid*[in] *ta 'ayyana lahū 'l-ghalabu bi-'l- 'aṣabiyyati"*, Ibn Khaldūn, op. cit., p. 232.

[60]) al-'Alī, op. cit., 157; al-Sharīf, *Makka wa al-Madīna*, p. 28; Jawād 'Alī-*al-Mufaṣṣal*, vol. IV, 349–350.

In the same time contradictory conclusions were reached by Lammens and Tyan when the first had asserted that the succession to the leadership was not based on heredity, while the latter had pointed out that hereditary succession was the rule. Madelung while relating to these conclusions gives the impression that the element of heredity was considered irregular in traditional society. Madelung, op.cit., p. 5.

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buyūtāt.[61]) Abū ʿUbayda was certainly aware of the differences between the ruling tribal institution and that of monarchy, especially with regard to the different methods of succession.

The tribal institution of *siyāda* was, of course, not based on the principles of Greek democracy as the latter was known in the Greek *polis*. In other words, *siyāda* as practiced among Arab tribes was neither strictly hereditary nor strictly elective in the accepted sense of these words. It was, however, both hereditary and elective according to the Arab connotation of these terms.

It may be said that *siyāda* was not strictly hereditary because the succession did not pass automatically to the eldest son of the dead leader. The new leader was required to have all the relevant traits and qualifications for the position, and to be a member of the clan, but without consideration of the degree of his relationship with the last *sayyid*. It was not enough for a candidate to be a son of the deceased leader in order to ensure that he would rule in his father's stead. Tribal leadership was awarded on the basis of qualifications alone,[62]) the element of direct succession played no role whatsoever in this appointment. This is unequivocally clarified by the poet ʿĀmir b. al-Ṭufayl.[63]) Another poet rules out the possibility of obtaining tribal leadership simply as a function or result of noble origins, and emphasizes that only personal qualifications could guarantee the role of *sayyid*.[64])

Nonetheless, it is impossible to conclude from the above that noble origin did not contribute to improving the candidate's chances of achieving the position. Quite the contrary: noble origin was sometimes an important factor, along with personal qualifications.[65]) The element of competition did

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[61]) *Aghānī*, vol. XVII, pp. 105–106.

[62]) Watt M., *Islamic Political Thought*, p. 35; al-ʿAlī, op. cit., 157.

[63]) The verses of ʿĀmir go as follows:

"Wa-innī wa-in kuntu ʾbna fārisi ʿĀmir^{in},
wa-sayyidihā al-mashhūri, fī kulli mawkibi,
fa-mā sawwadatnī ʿĀmir^{un} *ʿan wirāthat*^{in}
abā allāhu an asmū bi-umm^{in} *wa-lā abi.*

("Though I am the son of the horseman of Banū ʿĀmir, and though I am the son of their well-known chief everywhere, Banū ʿĀmir did not give me the office of *sayyid* out of hereditary rights. God will never allow that I obtain high degree through the noble origin of my parents.") *al-Shiʿr wa-al-Shuʿarā'*, p. 192.

[64]) al-Masʿūdī, op. cit., vol. III, 112–113; *al-ʿIqd al-farīd*, vol. II, p. 290; *Dhayl al-amālī*, 117.

[65]) *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, p. 355 (v. nos. 3, 4, 5, 6). Sometimes the noble birth and the hereditary dignity are sufficient to reach the office of the *sayyid* and no attention is

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not always play a part; moreover, in several instances not in line with the generally accepted method, the successor was nominated by his father, the *sayyid*, according to a will made before his death.[66]) According to the tribal Arab concept, the will of a dying man was valid and should be honored after his death.[67]) The method also involved the element of selection. This selection, however, was not an election according to the accepted criteria of democracy. The right of selection was not extended to all members of the tribe, but was restricted to the senior clan members who represented their clans in the *majlis* of the tribe.[68]) Candidacy for the post of *sayyid* was also not open to all tribe members, but restricted to a small and privileged group within the *bayt*, or ruling family.

IV

This was the political-administrative culture in which the Arabs of that time were raised. Men of Muḥammad's generation were still bound by this political concept, as the few years in which the Prophet had been active and had promulgated the principles of Islam had not been nearly enough time to eradicate the existing tribal political concept. Accordingly, if the community leaders wished to preserve, foster and develop Muḥammad's achievement, they had no choice but to adhere to this concept. From the experience of the recent past, the members of the Prophet's generation had learned of the risks inherent in any deviation from the tribal political framework, which had no tolerance for any change in the model of leadership. The Qurayshites still remembered the unrest which had swept over Makka as the result of an attempt to deviate from the framework of *siyāda* and to establish a sort of tribal monarchy, when a certain nobleman from Quraysh named 'Uthmān b. al-Ḥuwayrith proposed to rule as king of Makka under the patronage of the Byzantines.[69]) In view of the existing situation in Ma-

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paid to the personal qualifications of the candidate to the office. *al-Ḥayawān*, vol. II, p. 96.

[66]) al-Zubayr b. Bakkār, *al-Akhbār al-muwaffaqiyyāt*, p. 626; Jawād 'Alī, op. cit., vol. IV, 349..

[67]) Wellhausen, op. cit., p. 34 (no. 23).

[68]) The outstanding example of such *majlis* was the *majlis* of Quraysh called also *mala'*. Ṭabarī, vol. I, pp. 1229–1230. On the nature of the tribal *majlis*, see: al-Sharīf, op. cit., al-'Alī, op.cit. pp. 155–156. Watt M., *Islamic Political Thought*, p. 35; Belyaev, op. cit., 62.

[69]) Khalīl 'Athamina, *The tribal Kings*.

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dina immediately before the Prophet's death, the awareness of political goings-on prevailing among Arab society, and the ambitions of the Arab-Muslim nobility, which hoped to continue on Muḥammad's path, it was essential to establish a ruling body which could adapt to the existing circumstances and would be based on the guidelines characteristic of the accepted model for leadership in Arab society, which was the tribal institution of the *siyāda*. This leads to another question: was the caliphate established actually parallel to the *siyāda*, without deviating from the accepted framework? Reconstruction of the events which took place on the day of the Prophet's death and resulted in the rise of the caliphate and the reign of Abū Bakr will supply the required answers.

The apparatus of the tribal *siyāda* was based on a series of permanent institutions, whose existence and operation were a guarantee of the proper functioning of that apparatus. The appointment of the *sayyid* had to take place at the regular meeting of the tribe, known as the *majlis* or the *nādī* (assembly), which generally took place at the home of the *sayyid* being appointed.[70]) The persons holding the right of selection were the senior representatives of the various clans constituting the tribe.[71])

Abū Bakr's appointment was accomplished according to the procedure for appointing the *sayyid*. It took place at the *saqīfa* of *Banū Sāʿida* – one of the principal clans of the al-Khazraj tribe. The *saqīfa* was not a stone building, but a large hut or booth built on pillars made of palm tree trunks. There were many such booths in Madina, generally serving as a sort of assembly hall for the tribe.[72]) In this, it was similar to the *majlis* or *nādī* of the tribe.

The dignitaries assembled in response to the invitation by Saʿd b. ʿUbāda,[73]) who – in addition to being the third-generation *sayyid* of the Khazraj (his father and grandfather had held this role before him) – was

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[70]) al-ʿAlī, op. cit., pp. 155–156. In Makka for example, the assembly was held in *dār al-nadwa*, the house of the assembly, which was located near the Kaʿba. al-Sharīf, op. cit., pp. 115–116. On the terminology used to denote the tribal assembly see: *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 241 (n. 34), 336 (n. 24), 120 (n. 10), 243 (n. 14), 367 (n. 3).

[71]) Though attendance of the *Majlis* was open to every adult male of the tribe, only the representatives of the clans had the right to participate in the decision making. al-ʿAlī op. cit., 155; al-Sharīf, op. cit., pp. 27–28; Watt M., *Islamic Political Thought*, p. 40; Belyaev, op. cit., 62; Blachère R., *Histoire de la Littérature Arabe* (Arabic tr.), p. 35. For this reason Jāhilī poets praised their forefathers who had had the right to attend these tribal assemblies. *Dīwān Zuhayr*, p. 113; *al-Bayān wa-al-tabyīn*, vol. III, 97–98; *al-ʿIqd al farīd*, III, 298; *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 241.

[72]) *Muʿjam al-buldān (saqīfa)*; *Lisān al-ʿarab (s.q.f)*. The *Saqifa* was used also as a gesting house for visitors. Ibn Shabba, *Tārīkh al-madīna*, vol. I, p. 72, 77.

[73]) *Ansāb*, vol. I, p. 580 (n. 1174).

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also the *sayyid* of all the *Anṣār.*[74]) The initiative to convene the conference was a normal move, and one which could have been expected, for a man of his stature and authority as *sayyid*. The invitees in the first stage were the nobility *(ashrāf)* of the *Anṣār.*[75])

Contrary to many other events, no detailed official record of the nobles present at the conference has come down to us, except for three persons. It is quite reasonable to believe that the following generations of the *Anṣār* sought to obscure the memory of their forefathers' presence at the conference, which was recorded in history as an embarrassing defeat of an attempted measure subsequently defined as anti-Islamic.[76])

Sa'd b. 'Ubāda's failure to invite representatives of the *Muhājirūn* was not appreciated by some of the *Anṣār*, who sent them a special messenger in order to tell them of the conference and the intentions of those invited, and to act toward frustrating those intentions.[77]) The members of this group of the *Anṣār* viewed the measure taken by Sa'd and his supporters as a separatist move liable to develop into a *fitna*, or "brother's war."[78]) In this, they supported the idea of the *umma*, which Muḥammad had attempted to substantiate after reaching Madina – an idea intended from the outset to weaken the tribal social structure which had existed before his arrival[79]) and to create a sort of united political entity involving a number of tribes.[80]) The very approach to 'Umar and/or Abū Bakr indicates the senior status of these two personages within the Muslim community, to which they both represented the *Muhājirūn* as a whole – both the earlier and the later migrants, both those of Quraysh and those of other tribes. In other words, if we may use the terminology of the time, they were the *ashrāf* of the *Muhā-*

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[74]) Ibn Qudāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Istibṣār*, 93–95; Ibn Hishām, op. cit., 706.

[75]) *Sharḥ*, vol. VI, 6–7; *al-Imāma wa-al-siyāsa*, vol. I, 5; Ibn Hishām, op. cit., 1073.

[76]) Madelung, op. cit., p. 32.

[77]) The historical reports do not unanimously identify the Anṣārī delegate and to whom the report was sent, to 'Umar or to Abū Bakr. Ibn Hishām, op. cit., 1071; Ṭabarī, vol. I, 1839. In another version the delegates are identified, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. I, 581 (n. 1177); *al-'Iqd al-farīd*, vol. VI, 257.

[78]) *Ansāb al-al-ashrāf*, vol. I, 581; *Sharḥ*, vol. VI, p. 7; *al-'Iqd al-farīd*, vol. VI, 257. According to Madelung, the *Anṣār* met to restore their control over their own city. He denies the accusation that they were plotting to seize the reign in succession to Muḥammad, op. cit., p. 31. Almost the same views were reached by Donner, who states that the *Anṣār* were disenchanted enough with the position enjoyed by the Quraysh that they yearned for a return to "home rule". Donner F., op. cit., p. 82.

[79]) Nagel, op. cit. (especially, 184).

[80]) Serjeant R. B., *The Constitution of Medina. al-Akhbār al-ṭiwāl*, p. 157.

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jirūn. The presence of the three – both of those mentioned above and Abū ʿUbayda – completed the circle of representation; both entities of the *umma*, the *Muhājirūn* and the *Anṣār*, were present at the conference. The representative forum that convened in the *saqīfa* became the legal forum with the authority to appoint the caliph. These were the grounds cited later by ʿAlī in seeking to prove the legitimacy of his rule, in a letter which he sent to Muʿāwiya, who refused to recognize the legality of his appointment.[81])

ʿAlī's argument, as set forth in that letter, is more in line with the Islamic concept – or, more precisely, the Sunnite concept – which was formulated in subsequent generations with regard to the caliphate. However, it by no means reflects the Arab concept of rule that prevailed for at least two decades following the Prophet's death. Most of the criticism directed against the *saqīfa* event focused on the nonexistence of the element of consultation, *al-mashwara* or *al-mashūra*, which, in order to have properly taken place, would have required the presence and participation of all persons representing the clans in the decision-making forum. Two of the leaders competing for the position, ʿAlī and al-Zubayr b. al-ʿAwwām, focused their criticism on this point.[82]) The two engineers of the caliphate and the two heroes of the *saqīfa* conference admitted their fault in this matter and noted that there had indeed been a defect in implementing the principle of *mashūra*. In Abū Bakr's meeting with ʿAlī, he explained to him that his not having been asked was the result of time pressure, as any deferment of the decision might have taken the rule out of Quraysh's hands.[83]) The day after Abū Bakr's appointment, he formally undertook to maintain this principle.[84]) In ʿUmar's subsequent reconstruction of the chain of events at the *saqīfa* conference, he defined Abū Bakr's appointment as a *falta*, or precipitate deal[85]), and warned that no such appointments should be made in future, in disregard of the principle of *mashūra*. He went so far as to state that any such appointment would be deemed an illegal act, and the participants

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[81]) *al-Akhbār al-ṭiwāl*, p. 157.

[82]) *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. I, 587; *Sharḥ*, vol. VI, 48; vol. II, 50; *Kanz al-ʿummāl*, vol. II, (n. 14060); *al-Ḥalabiyya*, vol. III, 484; *al-Bidāya wa-al-nihāya*, vol. VI, 302; *Tārīkh al-Islām (al-khulafāʾ al-rāshidūn)*, p. 13.

[83]) Ibn al-ʿIbrī, p. 99. Madelung considers that *shūrā* would not have been in the interest of Abū Bakr, without general discussion he had the chance to secure the *bayʿa* to himself and not to other candidates, op. cit., p. 40.

[84]) Ṭabarī, vol. I, 1840; *al-Imāma wa al-siyāsa*, vol. I, 12.

[85]) *Sharḥ*, vol. 35; *ʿUthmāniyya*, 198; Ibn Hishām, op. cit., 1073; Ṭabarī, vol. I, 1845; *al-Ḥalabiyya* III, 490; *al-Bidāya wa-al-nihāya*, IV, 489; Ibn Abī Shayba, op. cit., vol. XIV, p. 565.

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therein – both the appointee and anyone swearing fealty to him – would be put to death.[86])

In view of the fact that the Prophet had established no formal institution for consultation[87]), and even his occasional consultations with some of his Companions were on the individual level and not in any way formal or institutionalized, Abū Bakr – senior member of the group and closest to the Prophet's heart – was prominent among those with whom he consulted.[88]) Generally speaking, however, the Prophet would involve no others, not even Abū Bakr, in his decisions; this was true even of important decisions, which he took pains to keep to himself.[89]) Being a Prophet, Muḥammad had no need of any advisory forum, as his steps and decisions obviously expressed the will of Heaven.

All of the above indicates that, in the absence of any advisory institution or forum set up by the Prophet, the fact that the principle of consultation, or *al-mashwara*, was not properly observed at the *saqīfa* event (and thereby occasioned criticism) resulted solely from Arab political tradition, according to which the right to participate in the discussion and decision when appointing the new *sayyid* was reserved for the various representatives of the tribe's clans. The principle of *mashūra* was especially important when there was no convincing candidate to inherit the position, or where there were several candidates equally qualified to receive it.[90]) It should be noted, in this connection, that the principle of *mashūra* did not disappear from tribal political tradition even following the establishment of the theocratic caliphate by the Umayyads, but retained its full force and meaning in the tribal political context.[91])

The element of noble origin, which was one of the fundamental principles of the *siyāda* in its classic tribal sense, was not absent from the scene at the *saqīfa* conference. This element was emphasized by both Abū Bakr and ʿUmar. In raising the element of nobility, both of them sought to prove

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[86]) Ibn Hishām, op. cit., 1073; *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, I, 584; al-*Ḥalabiyya*, III, 490.

[87]) Wellhausen, op. cit., p. 34.

[88]) Madelung, op. cit., p. 5.

[89]) The Prophet used to keep in secret his military plans even from his close friends and his wives, Ibn Hishām, op. cit., 857; al-Wāqidī, op. cit., 990.

[90]) Jawād ʿAlī, op. cit., vol. VI. 349–350.

[91]) When the Umayyad governor in Iraq lost control after the sudden death of the Caliph Yazīd b. Muʿāwiya, and escaped to Syria, Banū Tamīm in Baṣra swore the oath of fealty to a certain ʿAbd-Allāh b. al-Ḥārith and brought him to the governor's house. They nominated him *amīr*, without consulting the other tribal groups in the city, Rabīʿa and Yemen who refused to recognize him as legitimate ruler because they did not participate in taking the decision. *Al-Naqāʾiḍ*, pp. 112–113.

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that the *Anṣār*'s claim to succession was unfounded, as this element was still the determining criterion for the continued rule of the ruling family. Al-Jāḥiẓ's commentary leaves no room for doubt that this was the criterion which settled the fate of the leadership as reflected in Arab thought patterns of the time.[92]) The key sentence in Abū Bakr's speech, in which he sought to prove that the Arabs would accept the sovereignty of no man who was not of the Qurayshite rulers, was that: *"wa-hum awsaṭu al-'arabi nasaban wa-dāra."* ("They are the noblest of all the Arabs.")[93]) In another version of that speech, Abū Bakr stressed the right of the Quraysh tribe to rule, in light of their closeness to the Prophet.[94]) He referred to this closeness in the following terms: *"wa-hum awliyā'uhu wa-'ashīratuhu, wa-aḥaqqu 'n-nāsi bihadhā 'l-amri ba'dah"* ("They are his successors and members of his clan, and they are the most entitled of all to receive this thing [the caliphate] after his death").[95])In the course of the argument which broke out following the extreme declarations of the *Anṣār* spokesman, 'Umar repeated Abū Bakr's sentence almost word for word, while emphasizing the expression *awliyā'uhū*, which denoted the successors of Muḥammad.[96]) This expression, in addition to the element of family blood relationship, also expresses the element of an inheritance to which the family mem-

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[92]) Referring to the reason behind the words of Abū Bakr, al-Jāḥiẓ comments that Abū Bakr addressed people who believed that nobility and kinship have a decisive weight. For this reason he used the same means of understanding in which they believed *al-'Uthmāniyya*, p. 201.

[93]) Ibn-Hishām, op. cit., 1073; Ṭabari, vol. I, 1823; *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. I, 582; Ibn Abī Shayba, op. cit., vol. XIV, 569–570. On the use of this expression to denote the pure noble origin of an individual man or a group of men either in classical poetry or in the Qur'ān, see: Abū 'Ubayda, *Majāz al-qur'ān*, vol. I, 59; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya*, vol. II, 184; *Lisān al-'arab (w.s.ṭ)*; *Tāj al-'arūs (w.s.ṭ)*; al-Qurṭubi, *al-Jāmi'* vol. II, p. 6; Tha'lab, *Sharḥ dīwān Zuhayr*, p. 276.

[94]) Madelung maintains that Abū Bakr based the right of Quraysh to rule solely on the tribal Arab obedience, not on their relationship to Muḥammad, because, according to Madelung, he did everything to avoid the case of 'Alī being raised. Basing the right of Quraysh on their being Muḥammad's kin is a later elaboration of the events of *Saqīfa*, as Madelung claims, op. cit., p. 37. It is worth mentioning in this context that 'Alī, or the Hāshimite family, was too weak and too humble in that moment to be a threat to the ambition of Abū Bakr to get the rule, as will be seen in the following pages.

[95]) Ṭabarī, vol. I, 1840.

[96]) Ibid., vol. I, 1841; *Sharḥ*, vol. VI, 9. Bashīr b. Sa'd the Anṣārite also asserted the right of the *awliyā'* to inherit' the rule of Muḥammad. Ṭabarī, vol. I, 1842; *Sharḥ*, VI, 10.

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bers of a dead or murdered man are entitled, including the succession to his rule.[97])

There can be no doubt of the political significance of this expression, in view of the fact that al-Jāḥiẓ distinguishes it from among the other meanings of the expression in stating that he is the successor, *khalīfa*.[98]) Moreover, the element of *wilāya*, which is the right of succession to rule, was deeply rooted within tribal political tradition.[99]) This tradition received religious sanction when ʿAbdullāh b. al-ʿAbbās concluded from verse XVII : 33 of the Qurʾān that the legitimacy of Muʿāwiya's rule was based on the right of family members to succeed the dead ruler.[100]) In this case, it was the Caliph ʿUthmān who had been unjustly murdered by the rebels from Iraq and Egypt.[101]) Classical Arabic poetry, especially that of al-Akhṭal and al-Farazdaq, emphasized the right of the Umayyads to succeed the murdered caliph, being the *awliyāʾ* of ʿUthmān.[102]) Another poet, who came to Muʿāwiya's court to inform him that ʿUthmān had been killed, urged him to arise and seize the succession, as he was the most worthy of inheriting the rule of his relative.[103]) In this connection, ʿAlī – Muʿāwiya's rival and competitor for succession – was quoted as demanding the right to rule for himself, due to his having been a relative of the murdered caliph[104]), despite the distant relation between ʿAlī and ʿUthmān (the former being a member of the *Banū Hāshim* and the second a member of the *Banū ʿAbd-Shams*). If the principle of *wilāya* in its political-administrative connotation continued in force for several decades following the Prophet's death, it is easy to argue that it was valid on the day of his death, and it would even have made sense for Abū Bakr and others to present this principle as a central argument in order to substantiate the right of the *Muhājirūn* of Quraysh to succeed the Prophet.

The above two elements – the noble origin of Quraysh and their status as the *awliyāʾ* of the Prophet – as cited by Abū Bakr were by no means inno-

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[97]) (Abū ʿUbayda), *Majāz*, op. cit., vol. I, 124; al-Farrāʾ, *Maʿanī al-qurʾān*, vol. II, 161; *Lisān al-ʿarab* (*w.l.i*); al-Qurṭubī, vol. IV, 166.

[98]) *Al-ʿUthmāniyya*, 208.

[99]) Watt M. W., "God's Caliph, Qurʾānic Interpretation and Umayyad claims," *Iran and Islam*.

[100]) Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr*, vol. IV, 284; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān*, vol. IV, 38–39; *al-ʿIqd al-farīd*, vol. IV, 299.

[101]) Crone P. and M. Hinds, *God's Caliph*, pp. 31–32.

[102]) Al-Sukkarī, *Shiʿr al-Akhṭal*, vol. I, 85, 336; *Dīwān al-Farazdaq*, vol. I, 25, 62, 144, 192, 240, 250, 285, vol. II, 92.

[103]) *al-Akhbār al-ṭiwāl*, p. 155.

[104]) Madelung, p. 142 (citing Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, vol. II, 214-215, note: 6).

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vative. Nevertheless, Abū Bakr's words involved an element of transformation. By mentioning Quraysh in general, he eliminated the restricted connotation of *al-bayt* or *ahl al-bayt* in the classic sense, as he did not limit himself to the *buyūtāt* (ruling families) of Quraysh – such as *Banū 'Abd-Manāf*, *Banū Hāshim*, *Banū 'Abd-Shams*, *Banū Taym* or *Banū Makhzūm*, which had held the *siyāda* in previous generations. Abū Bakr spoke of the tribe of Quraysh as a whole, including all of its branches and clans, as the new ruling family. Extension of the concept of *al-bayt*, whose basic nucleus had always been the clan, to the dimensions of an entire tribe such as Quraysh, was in line with the pan-tribal orientation exhibited by Abū Bakr and 'Umar at the *saqīfa* conference, when they cited the obedience of the Arab tribes as an objective of the new rule to be established.[105]) In other words, if they desired to broaden the scope of the new leader's powers outside the realm of the tribe, it was only logical to also broaden the base – in this case, *al-bayt* – from which the leader would be drawn, and not to limit it to its former size. It should be noted here that a similar phenomenon existed in Arab society, albeit relatively rarely; on occasion, the *sayyid*'s powers were extended outside the scope of the tribe, to encompass several additional tribes[106]), a fact which shows that the pan-tribal orientation had its roots in the pre-Islamic period.

At the same time as Abū Bakr's speech appeared to pave the way for all the clans of Quraysh to have a chance to compete for the role of ruler, it actually eliminated the classic leadership which had last been held by Abū Sufyān of the house of Umayya, whose leadership had been officially frozen following the conquest of Makka by the Prophet, but had continued to exist in Arab public awareness, especially among the men of Quraysh. The spontaneous response of the elder Abū Quḥāfa, Abū Bakr's father, on hearing that his son had been appointed as ruler, attests to the continuation of this leadership, at least in the public awareness.[107]) Granting the status of

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[105]) Shaban maintains that the rule of Abū Bakr brought a kind of supertribal regime side by side with the old-fashion existing types of rule. M. A. Shaban, op. cit., p. 27.

[106]) Ibn Ḥazm, op. cit., 251; Ibn Sa'īd, op. cit., vol. II, 552; *al-Dībāj*, p. 93.

[107]) When Abū Quḥāfa heard about the nomination of Abū Bakr, his son, he was surprised and responded: Did Banū 'Abd-Manāf accept that, *Sharḥ*, vol. I, 156. On other versions of Abū Quḥāfa's response see: Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. II (1), p. 130; *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, Ms., part II, fol. 240 a; al-Suyūṭī, p. 72. On another occasion Abū Quḥāfa had urged his son to speak lowly in the presence of Abū Sufyān to pay this noble man his respect. *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. IV (a), p. 7; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Nizā' wa-al-takhāṣum*, p. 30.

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ahl al-bayt to the entire tribe of Quraysh also provided a response to the inmost feelings of various clans of that tribe, which yearned to open the option of rule to their representatives, rather than leaving it in the hands of the hereditary nobility which had held the *siyāda* from earliest times. This feeling is reflected in a tradition handed down under the authority of al-Sha'bī, according to which the men of Quraysh feared that, should their leadership fall into the hands of the Prophet's family, it would be difficult to regain the rule, and should another clan take over Muḥammad's rule, this would give every clan in Quraysh the opportunity of realizing its ruling ambitions.[108]) This move did not only satisfy the Qurayshites; it also reflected the opinion of other tribal elements, especially the leaders of the Thaqīf tribe.[109]) No wonder, in such a political atmosphere, that the drastic reform launched by Abū Bakr at the *saqīfa* conference won such mass sympathy and support as to silence entirely the few scattered voices of the opposition.

V

Despite the considerable importance of tribal political heritage in deciding the matter of rule, it would not be wise to overlook the religious factor, which also had its role – albeit a modest and sometimes even covert one – in determining the form of the new rule. In his speech, Abū Bakr praised the part played by *al-muhājirūn al-awwalūn* in the success of the Prophet's mission, and spoke extensively of their suffering, their perseverance in the faith, their firm stand in the face of their enemies' unflagging hostility, and their sacrifice for the sake of Islam.[110]) The magnificent past of this group, of which Abū Bakr was the most senior representative, paved its way to the top of the political spectrum in the Prophet's lifetime in Madina. The special status gained by Abū Bakr as the Prophet's counsel and right hand left no room to doubt that he, and only he of all members of the first group of *Muhājirūn*, would take the Prophet's place. The comment which he made to his father, Abū Quḥāfa, who expressed his astonishment that his son had attained the post of caliph[111]), actually reflected the role of what

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[108]) *Sharḥ*, vol. IV; 58.

[109]) It was reported that al-Mughīra b. Shu'ba had urged Abū Bakr and encouraged him to adopt the Qurayshite orientation before he joined the meeting at the *Saqīfa*. *Sharḥ*, vol. VI, 43.

[110]) Ṭabarī, vol. I, 1840.

[111]) Addressing his father, Abū Bakr said: "Allāh, by the means of Islam, had destroyed some ruling families, one of them was that of Abū Sufyān, and in the same

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was then the young Islamic religion in the statutory changes which took place in the last ten years of the Prophet's life.

By contrast to the rising power of *al-muhājirūn al-awwalūn*, the status of the other players was waning. The importance of the *Anṣār*, the original residents of Madina, had declined with the rise of the Prophet's achievements, military and political alike, among the Arab tribes. Their status reached its nadir following the conquest of Makka and the mass conversion of the Quraysh tribe to Islam. The reflection, in practical terms, of the erosion of their status came after the Prophet's attack on Ṭā'if, when he gave generous presents to leaders and key persons from Quraysh and other tribes.[112]) This gave rise to caused anger and bitterness on the part of the *Anṣār*, who felt abandoned and humiliated, as they had not been among those receiving the gifts.[113]) The last attempt to improve their status came at the *saqīfa* conference, where they exhibited the desire to be given a dominant role, or at least an equal share, in the new leadership.[114]) This attempt did not succeed, due to internal rivalries and primarily because of the insistent position of *al-muhājirūn al-awwalūn*, as we have seen above.

The classical leadership of Makka as represented by Abū Sufyān, although not visibly present at the scene of the events, was still important. This was a hereditary leadership linked directly to the ancient Meccan nobility and the personage of Umayya b. 'Abd-Shams. Two members of that clan had held the role of *sayyid* of Makka. The first was Ḥarb b. Umayya, who attained prestige not only in Makka, but also among the Arab tribes.[115]) Arab tradition holds him responsible for establishing unprece-

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time He built up, by the means of Islam, some destroyed ruling families during the Jāhiliyya, it was your ruling family of which He had built it up. *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. IV (a), p. 7.

[112]) Ibn Hishām, op. cit., 928–932; Nagel H. M. T., *The Authority of the Caliphate*, op. cit., p. 183.

[113]) Ibid. op. cit., 934.

[114]) The trend of separatism was behind the movement of the *Anṣār*, when they suggested that both the Quraysh and the *Anṣār*, may choose their own chiefs. See: Donner F., op. cit., 82; Madelung, while adopting the same point of view, says that they wished to restore their control over their own city, Madelung, op.cit., p. 31. The *Anṣār* according to another point of view, decided to throw off what some of them might have considered a Meccan yoke. When they suggested to proclaim Sa'd b. 'Ubāda as *amīr*, they intended to recognize him leader of the Medinan *Anṣār*, not of the community as a whole. Nagel H. M. T., *The Authority of the Caliphate*, (especially p. 183)

[115]) *al-Naqā'iḍ*, p. 119.

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dented social and ethical standards in Makka.[116]) The second leader was Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ, who continued to rule as *sayyid* during the first period of the Prophet's mission, and whose influence was considerable.[117]) However, the prestige of *Banū 'Abd-Shams* declined for a brief period following the death of Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ; during that period, Abū Jahl of the *Banū Makhzūm* assumed power, and headed the opposition to the Prophet until being killed at the battle of Badr in the year 2 of the *hijra*/624 AD. His place in the leadership of Makka was taken by Abū Sufyān b. Ḥarb, who continued as *sayyid* until the city was taken by Muḥammad.[118]) The conquest of Makka, however, did not weaken the status of *Banū 'Abd-Shams*; Muḥammad did not even depose Abū Sufyān as *sayyid* of Quraysh. His special gesture to this great man when the occupying army entered the city, phrased in the famous words *"man dakhala dāra Abī Sufyāna fa-huwa āmin"*... ("Anyone who enters the house of Abū Sufyān is safe")[119]), gave legal and even religious sanction to Abū Sufyān's status. The Prophet not only preserved the honor of *Banū 'Abd-Shams*[120]), but adopted a policy of conciliation toward them and appointed several of them – chiefly Abū Sufyān himself and his son Yazīd – to senior administrative positions in the emerging state.[121]) Several members of this clan were among Muḥammad's first associates, especially 'Uthmān, whose father had not belonged to the elite of the family. Admittedly, 'Uthmān belonged to *al-muhājirūn al-awwalūn*; he was not, however, on the level of his two predecessors in the caliphate.[122]) By contrast to them, he showed no special predisposition for public leadership, nor any political ambition.[123]) As the senior representative of *Banū 'Abd-Shams*, 'Uthmān performed no activity related to the *saqīfa* events. He shut himself up in his house, accompanied by several members of his household, and swore fealty to Abū Bakr as a private citizen.[124])

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[116]) *al-Dībāj*, pp. 129-130.

[117]) Ibid., p. 130; Ibn Sa'īd, op. cit., vol. I, 346; Watt W. M., *Muhammad at Mecca*, 92.

[118]) Wellhausen, op. cit., 38; *Muhammad at Mecca*, 92.

[119]) Ibn Hishām, op. cit., 863.

[120]) Wellhausen, op. cit., 38.

[121]) Nine persons of this family were appointed in administrative positions by the Prophet according to the list of administrators given by Ibn Khayyāṭ, *Tārīkh*, vol. I, p. 72; Ṭabarī, vol. I, 1750; al-Muḥabbar, 125; al-Maqrīzī, op. cit., 47. The same policy of appeasement towards this clan continued under the rule of Abū Bakr and 'Umar. Madelung, op. cit., p. 45; *Sharḥ*, vol. IV, pp. 29–30.

[122]) *Muhammad at Mecca*, p. 93.

[123]) Madelung, op. cit., 80.

[124]) *Sharḥ*, vol. IV, 11.

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Naturally, members of the elite circle of *Banū ʿAbd-Shams* nobility were outside the select group of *al-muhājirūn al-awwalūn*, and could not compete with Abū Bakr for the position. According to all the evidence at our disposal, they did not express objection to his appointment, as they continued to hold administrative posts during the rule of both Abū Bakr and ʿUmar, and were even assigned senior positions as military commanders in the *ridda* wars and the subsequent campaigns against Syria.[125]) Also worthy of note is the fact that at least seven men from the elite of *Banū ʿAbd-Shams* were not present in Madina at the time of the Prophet's death, as they were all out in the provinces, where they had received administrative positions from the Prophet[126]), and did not return until they had completed their assignments, quite some time after Abū Bakr's appointment. Khālid b. Saʿīd, for example, was in Yemen, and would have needed several months to return to Madina; it would therefore not have been unreasonable for him to have sworn fealty to Abū Bakr after two – or, according to another version, six – months had elapsed.[127]) Accordingly, his tardiness in swearing fealty must not be interpreted as due to any objection to the appointment; rather, it stemmed from purely technical considerations. This does not mean, however, that *Banū ʿAbd-Shams* were entirely pleased with Abū Bakr's appointment; it may safely be assumed that some of the criticism enounced against the appointment expressed the bitterness of that clan.[128]) At the same time, we must take into account that some of these critical remarks were intentionally exaggerated or even fabricated by the Shīʿa, in order to undermine the legitimacy of rule by the first three caliphs and to strengthen the Shiʿite position, which maintained that the exclusive right to the caliphate was held by ʿAlī and his household.

At this stage, the *Banū Hāshim* – the Prophet's own clan of origin – did not have enough political influence to affect developments. A long time had elapsed since the ancestors of that clan had headed the leadership of Makka. For an entire generation before the inception of the Prophet's mission, the

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[125]) Ṭabarī, vol. I, 2135–6. On their role in the supreme command of the Muslim armies, see: *Sharḥ*, vol. IV, 29–30; Madelung, op. cit., 45.

[126]) al-Maqrīzī, op. cit., p. 47

[127]) *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. I, 588; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tārīkh*, p. 97.

[128]) Ṭabarī, vol. I, 1827–1828; al-Maqrīzī, op. cit., 30, 47; *al-ʿUthmāniyya*, 190; *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. I, 588–589. False reports on this topic can easily appear, the outstanding example of such material is the poem attributed to Abū Sufyān in which he denounces both Abū Bakr's and ʿUmar's caliphate because of their humble origin. *Sharḥ*, vol. IV, p. 17. If indeed Abū Sufyān did criticize the caliphate of the first one, why should he include ʿUmar in his criticism before ʿUmar being caliph?

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power of *Banū Hāshim* had declined, leading them to join the group of weaker and poorer clans in Makka. Under the leadership of Abū Ṭālib, ʿAlī's father, their status continued to decline.[129]) The Prophet's other uncles, especially Abū Lahab and al-ʿAbbās, were incapable of ensuring their nephew's safety in Makka following the death of Abū Ṭālib, thus indicating the degree of their weakness and dependence on others.[130]) At the time of the Prophet's death, the *Banū Hāshim* were represented by two men: ʿAlī and his uncle al-ʿAbbās; generally speaking, the two were overshadowed by the Prophet's personality and were not important enough to influence events. Examination of available sources shows that they do not appear in the list of functionaries and governors appointed by the Prophet.[131])

ʿAlī, in the eyes of his generation, was not considered to be the leader of *Banū ʿAbd-Manāf*, the forefather of the *Banū Hāshim* and *Banū ʿAbd-Shams* clans, notwithstanding the claims set forth by later Shiʿte propaganda.[132]) Moreover, at 29, he was quite young according to the criteria of the time, a fact which detracted from his chances to achieve a leadership role.[133]) As for the second personage, al-ʿAbbās, he did not hold a position of power. This was due to the fact that he had become a Muslim relatively late, and that he had joined the hostile war effort conducted by Quraysh against the Prophet, and had even fallen prisoner after the Badr battle. Both of these facts cast aspersions on his personality, left scars on his image, and made him appear weaker.[134]) The tradition which praises al-ʿAbbās and emphasizes his importance, his activity on behalf of Muḥammad, and his concern for the interests of ʿAlī and his family, is no more than a later reconstruction of the man's nature as the father of the Abbasid Caliphs, under whose influence and active interference the biography of the father of the dynasty was rewritten.[135])

In view of all these circumstances, *al-muhājirūn al-awwalūn* became the leading group in the political arena. In other words, they became *al-bayt/ahl al-bayt*, in the political-administrative sense of the term, after having

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[129]) *Muhammad at Mecca*, 32–33, 88.

[130]) Ibid., pp. 137–138.

[131]) Al-Maqrīzī, op. cit., 55–57.

[132]) See notes: 128, 124.

[133]) One of the main qualities of the *sayyid* in Jāhiliyya was that he should be an aged person. A young *sayyid* was the exception, *Dīwān al-Khansā'*, p. 32. As to ʿAlī's young age as a barrier on his way to leadership, see: *al-Imāma wa-al-siyāsa*, vol. I, p. 11–12; *Sharḥ*, vol. IV, 12, 45.

[134]) Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalāni, vol. II, 27.

[135]) Kister M. J., *Notes on the Papyrus Account of the ʿAqaba Meeting.*

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(briefly) crowded out *Banū 'Abd-Shams*, which had been the actual representatives of *al-bayt* and had held the right to leadership and rule.

The appointment of 'Umar as successor by Abū Bakr was not an exceptional move. Those who criticized the appointment did not reject either the actual action nor the way in which it was performed; their criticism was aimed at the man appointed, on a personal and perhaps also a factual basis.[136]) The appointment was certainly not made in accordance with any religious instruction. It was, however, in line with tribal political tradition: the *sayyid* had the authority to appoint his heir in his lifetime.[137])

The forum appointed by 'Umar to decide who would succeed him[138]) followed the policy instituted by Abū Bakr at the *saqīfa* conference – a policy which stated that the Muslim leader would come exclusively from the tribe of Quraysh. This policy was borne out by the appointment of the six *ahl al-shūrā*, all of whom belonged to *al-muhājirūn al-awwalūn*. This move transformed the slogan of *al-a'imma min Quraysh*, first uttered at the *saqīfa* conference, into political reality. The justification given by 'Umar – that he had appointed these six men only because the Prophet was pleased with them *(wa-huwa 'anhum rāḍin)* at the time of his death[139]) – does not appear convincing to me. The fact is that many of the Prophet's Companions, whether they came from Quraysh, from the *Anṣār* or from other Arab tribes, achieved that prominence and were granted that grace by the Prophet[140]), but did not receive the privilege of being counted among the *shūrā*. According to another version, 'Umar selected these men to be *ahl al-shūrā* because the Prophet had foreseen that they would reach Paradise. According to that version, another man, Sa'īd b. Zayd b. 'Amr, was given the Prophetic message of entrance to Paradise, but 'Umar deliberately excluded him from the *shūrā*.[141]) The real reason for the appointment to that forum was emphasized by 'Umar himself, who stated that these men were the leaders and first among all the people, and that one of them would have to rule.[142]) The Prophetic *ḥadīth* was brought into the matter only to give religious sanction to a secular political decision. The very use of the term *shūrā* reinforces the po-

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[136]) Ṭabarī, vol. I, 2139, 2143–2144.

[137]) al-Zubayr b. Bakkār, op. cit., 626.

[138]) Madelung, op. cit., pp. 68–73.

[139]) Ibn Sa'd, op. cit., IV, 245; *al-Imāma wa-al-siyāsa*, vol. I, 24; Ibn Shabba, op. cit., vol. II, 889.

[140]) *Sharḥ*, vol. IV, p. 6.

[141]) Ṭabarī, vol. I, 2777–2778.

[142]) *"innī naẓartu fa-wajadtukum ru'asā'a 'n-nās wa-qādatahum, wa-lā yakūnu hadhā 'l-amru illā fīkum,"* Ṭabarī, I, 2278.

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litical orientation raised by 'Umar in his statement. The ancient use of the term *mashūra* or *mashwara*, as it appears in classical Arabic poetry, indicates those having the right of rule.[143]) The term with that meaning has continued to exist in the awareness of Arab tribesmen to this very day. The expression *ahl al-mashwara* – or its equivalent, *shawwār al-qôm*, *al-qawm* in standard Arabic, in the popular dialect prevailing today among many Bedouin of Jordan, Palestine, Syria and Iraq – is used as a synonym for the sheikh of the tribe or the ancient *sayyid*. Among the evidence of interaction between the institution of the traditional *siyāda* and that of the Muslim caliphate is the fact that the caliphs were called, among others, by the titles of both *sayyid* and *ra'īs*.[144])

Abbreviations

'Abd al-Rāziq = *al-Khilāfa wa-uṣūl al-ḥukm* (ed. Cairo), 3rd ed. 1925.

Abd al-Razzāq = al-Ṣan'ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, ed. Ḥabīb al-Raḥman al-A'ẓamī (Beirut 1970–72).

Abū al Baqā' = Hibatallāh al-Ḥillī, *al-Manāqib al-mazyadiyya*, ed. Ṣāliḥ Dararka and Muḥammad Khraisāt (Amman 1984).

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143) *(Dīwān al-Akhṭal)*, vol. I, 336; *Dīwān al-Farazdaq*, vol. II, 92.

144) In a dialogue between Abū Bakr and a certain woman of the tribe of Aḥmas he compared himself with the *ru'asā'* of her tribe. *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, vol. IV (n. 14047). 'Uthmān was also called *sayyid* by his wife Nā'ila, Ibn Ḥabīb, op. cit., 111. Mu'āwiya was identified as *sayyid Quraysh*, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. IV (a), 44. Marwān b. al-Ḥakam was proclaimed caliph, because he was the *sayyid* of his clan, *al-Akhbār al-ṭiwāl*, 285. Qaṭarī b. al-Fujā'a, the Khārijite leader who bore the title *"amīr al-mu'minīn,"* was also called *al-sayyid*. *Sharḥ*, vol. IV, 268.

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